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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/804,246	03/13/2001	Yasuhide Matsumoto	1573.1003	9130

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EXAMINER

KLINGER, SCOTT M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2153

DATE MAILED: 07/27/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/804,246

Applicant(s)

MATSUMOTO ET AL.

Examiner

Scott M. Klinger

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 March 2005.
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-30 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-30 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claims 1-30 are pending.

Response to Arguments

In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., "*a table storing therein, in association with each other, identifiers of persons using said virtual communications spaces ... means for determining a part of said character-train information to be used ...*") were not recited in the originally rejected claims. Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-30 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection, based on amendments to the claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okada et al. (U.S. Patent Number 6,393,461, hereinafter "Okada") in view of Bunney et al. (U.S. Patent Number 6,446,112, hereinafter "Bunney"). Okada discloses a communication management system for a chat system.

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In referring to claims 1 and 6, Okada shows substantial features of the claimed invention, including:

- A plurality of terminal devices forming a network:

Okada, Figure 2 shows a plurality of terminal devices 110, 120, and 130 forming a network

- Said terminal devices being adapted to transmit and receive messages to and from each other through any of a plurality of virtual communication spaces configured on the network:

Okada, Figure 7 shows the terminals transmit and receive messages to and from each other

- The messages transmitted and received being displayed on display means of each terminal device together with message sender identifying information of persons who send the messages:

Okada, Figure 7 shows the display of the terminal devices

However, Okada is silent as to the full implementation of the chat server. Okada does not explicitly show a table means for storing therein identifiers and corresponding character-train information of persons using said virtual communications spaces. Nonetheless this feature is well known in the art and would have been an obvious modification to the system disclosed by Okada as evidenced by Bunney.

In analogous art, Bunney discloses an IRC name translation protocol. Bunney shows a table means for storing therein identifiers and corresponding character-train information of persons using said virtual communications spaces: *"The translation and additional information transmission procedure according to the present invention will now be explained with reference to FIG. 5. A chat client can send a command to the chat proxy 39, which represents a conversion means, together with the address of the sender (terminal 3 e.g.). The chat proxy 39 contacts the session manager 23 to get a unique nickname with nine characters for the user 3. The session manager 23 accesses the session data base 50. This nickname supplied from the session manager 23 to the chat proxy 39 is required to be unique only with the current on-line users, it does not need to be unique across time and space. Therefore, a nick can be reused after*

the user logs out. The nickname is a combination of a host code unique within the network and the sequence ID specific to host and guaranteed to be unique on the host. Both codes are alphanumeric to provide maximum flexibility within nine characters. The chat proxy 39 then rewrites the IRC command with the nine character nickname and sends it to the IRC server 40 (reference 41). On the other hand, the IRC server 40 sends (reference 44) data to the client 20 (which is the reverse procedure of the incoming proxy), wherein the chat proxy (converting means) 39 effects the reverse translation. The chat proxy 39 can cache the translation to prevent performance problems with constant look-up in a storage device (cache) 42." (Bunney, col. 11, lines 25-49)

Bunney, Figures 3 and 4 show tables that, in combination, store in association with each other, identifiers of persons using said virtual communication spaces, identifiers of said virtual communication spaces and corresponding character train information of the persons. *"As can be seen from the above addresses, the user George X. can have different identities (George, Superman, Max) being respectively member of different groups (compu, sport, game, etc.). Each identity is easy to remember, and as there are different groups of users and one identity is only unique regarding one group, the numbers of interesting identities available for the users can be increased overall."* (Bunney, col. 9, lines 41-47)

A means for determining part of said character-train information to be used as an identifier of the person is inherently implied in a system that uses part of said character-train information to be used as an identifier of the person.

Given these teachings, a person of ordinary skill in the art would have readily recognized the desirability and advantages of modifying the system of Okada so as to use a table with 9 character identifiers and character train-information greater than 9 characters, such as taught by Bunney, in order to overcome the limitation of 9 characters when using IRC as the chat protocol.

In referring to claim 2, Okada in view of Bunney shows,

- Said table stores different character-train information for the identifier of a given person for use in respective, different ones of said virtual communication spaces:

Bunney, col. 9, lines 41-47 (see full quote above)

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In referring to claim 4, Okada in view of Bunney shows,

- Said terminal devices use said table in common:

A system in which the users have the character-train information displayed on their individual terminals (see Okada, Figure 7) inherently implies said terminal devices using said table means in common

In referring to claim 5, Okada in view of Bunney shows,

- The character-train information stored in said table is accessible from said respective terminal devices:

Okada, Figure 7 shows the character-train information stored in said table means is accessible from said respective terminal devices

In referring to claim 7, Okada in view of Bunney shows,

- Said network is formed of said plurality of terminal devices and a server:

Okada, Figure 2 shows a plurality of terminal devices **110**, **120**, and **130**, and a server **141** forming a network

- Character-train information to be stored in said table means is set in said server:

A chat server that receives messages from users associated with character-train information inherently implies storing said character-train information on said chat server

In referring to claim 8, Okada in view of Bunney shows,

- Said message sender identifier is converted into the character-train information at the terminal device, which receives the message:

Okada, Figure 7 shows the character-train information is displayed on the terminal devices which inherently implies that the user identifier information is converted on the terminal device

In referring to claim 9, 12, 13, 18, 21, 24, and 27 Okada shows substantial features of the

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claimed invention, including:

- A server:
Okada, Figure 2 shows a chat server 141
- A plurality of terminal devices forming a network with said server:
Okada, Figure 2 shows a plurality of terminal devices 110, 120, and 130 forming a network with said server 141
- Said terminal devices being adapted to transmit and receive messages to and from each other through any of a plurality of virtual communication spaces configured on the network:
Okada, Figure 7 shows the terminals transmit and receive messages to and from each other
- The messages transmitted and received being displayed on display means of each terminal device together with message sender identifying information of persons who send the messages:
Okada, Figure 7 shows the display of the terminal devices

However, Okada is silent as to the full implementation of the chat server. Okada does not explicitly show a table means for storing therein identifiers and corresponding character-train information and a search means for looking up said character train information. Nonetheless this feature is well known in the art and would have been an obvious modification to the system disclosed by Okada as evidenced by Bunney.

In analogous art, Bunney discloses an IRC name translation protocol. Bunney shows a table means for storing therein identifiers and corresponding character-train information and a search means for looking up said character train information: *Bunney, col. 11, lines 25-49* (see full quote above)

Bunney, Figures 3 and 4 show tables that, in combination, store in association with each other, identifiers of persons using said virtual communication spaces, identifiers of said virtual communication spaces and corresponding character train information of the persons. *Bunney, col. 9, lines 41-47* (see full quote above)

A means for determining part of said character-train information to be used as an identifier of

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the person is inherently implied in a system that uses part of said character-train information to be used as an identifier of the person.

Given these teachings, a person of ordinary skill in the art would have readily recognized the desirability and advantages of modifying the system of Okada so as to use a table with 9 character identifiers and character train-information greater than 9 characters, such as taught by Bunney, in order to overcome the limitation of 9 characters when using IRC as the chat protocol.

In referring to claims 10, 14, 15, 19, 22, and 25, Okada in view of Bunney shows:

- Said table stores different character-train information for the identifier of a given person for use in respective, different ones of said virtual communication spaces:

Bunney, col. 9, lines 41-47 (see full quote above)

- Said sender identifier and message are transmitted through a designated one of said virtual communication spaces:

A chat system that sends messages to receivers in a specific channel (see Okada, Figure 7) inherently implies the receivers are designated when the message is initially sent

- Said search means searches said table for the character-train corresponding to the designated virtual communication space and sender identifier:

A means for looking up character-train information associated with a user is inherently implied in a system that associates user information with character-train information with each user and displays said character-train information with a message

In referring to claim 11, Okada in view of Bunney shows,

- Said sender identifiers with messages are transmitted with receivers of said messages designated:

A chat system that sends messages to receivers in a specific channel (see Okada, Figure 7) inherently implies the receivers are designated when the message is initially sent

- Said table has stored therein said identifiers and corresponding character-train information for respective message receivers:

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A table means for storing identifiers and corresponding character-train information of users is inherently implied in a chat system that has character-train information associated with users

- Said search means searches for the character-train information corresponding to the message sender and the message receiver:

A means for looking up character-train information associated with a user is inherently implied in a system that associates user information with character-train information with each user and displays said character-train information with a message

In referring to claim 16, Okada in view of Bunney shows,

- Said sender identifiers with messages are transmitted with receivers of said messages designated:

A chat system that sends messages to receivers in a specific channel (see Okada, Figure 7) inherently implies the receivers are designated when the message is initially sent

- Said table has stored therein said identifiers and corresponding character-train information for respective message receivers:

A table means for storing identifiers and corresponding character-train information of users is inherently implied in a chat system that has character-train information associated with users

- Said search means searches for the character-train information corresponding to the message sender and the message receiver:

A means for looking up character-train information associated with a user is inherently implied in a system that associates user information with character-train information with each user and displays said character-train information with a message

In referring to claim 17, Okada in view of Bunney shows,

- Said sender identifiers with messages are transmitted with receivers of said messages designated:

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A chat system that sends messages to receivers in a specific channel (see Okada, Figure 7) inherently implies the receivers are designated when the message is initially sent

- Said table has stored therein said identifiers and corresponding character-train information for respective message receivers:

A table means for storing identifiers and corresponding character-train information of users is inherently implied in a chat system that has character-train information associated with users

- Said search means searches for the character-train information corresponding to the message sender and the message receiver:

A means for looking up character-train information associated with a user is inherently implied in a system that associates user information with character-train information with each user and displays said character-train information with a message

In referring to claim 20, Okada in view of Bunney shows,

- The identifier and a message of a message sender are transmitted with receivers of said message designated:

A chat system that sends messages to receivers in a specific channel (see Okada, Figure 7) inherently implies the receivers are designated when the message is initially sent

- Said table means has stored therein said identifiers and character-train information corresponding to said identifiers to be used in relation to respective message receivers:

A table means for storing identifiers and corresponding character-train information of users is inherently implied in a chat system that has character-train information associated with users

- Said search means searches for the character-train information corresponding to the message sender and the message receiver:

A means for looking up character-train information associated with a user is inherently implied in a system that associates user information with character-train information with each user and displays said character-train information with a message

In referring to claim 23, Okada in view of Bunney shows,

- The identifier and a message of a message sender are transmitted with receivers of said message designated:

A chat system that sends messages to receivers in a specific channel (see Okada, Figure 7) inherently implies the receivers are designated when the message is initially sent

- Said table means has stored therein said identifiers and character-train information corresponding to said identifiers to be used in relation to respective message receivers:

A table means for storing identifiers and corresponding character-train information of users is inherently implied in a chat system that has character-train information associated with users

- Said search means searches for the character-train information corresponding to the message sender and the message receiver:

A means for looking up character-train information associated with a user is inherently implied in a system that associates user information with character-train information with each user and displays said character-train information with a message

In referring to claim 26, Okada in view of Bunney shows,

- The identifier and a message of a message sender are transmitted with receivers of said message designated:

A chat system that sends messages to receivers in a specific channel (see Okada, Figure 7) inherently implies the receivers are designated when the message is initially sent

- Said table means has stored therein said identifiers and character-train information corresponding to said identifiers to be used in relation to respective message receivers:

A table means for storing identifiers and corresponding character-train information of users is inherently implied in a chat system that has character-train information associated with users

- Said search means searches for the character-train information corresponding to the message sender and the message receiver:

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A means for looking up character-train information associated with a user is inherently implied in a system that associates user information with character-train information with each user and displays said character-train information with a message

In referring to claim 28, Okada in view of Bunney shows,

- Said network comprises a plurality of terminal devices and one server, and said memory is provided in said server:

Okada, Figure 2 shows a plurality of terminal devices **110**, **120**, and **130** and a server **141** forming a network. A computer **140** that runs a chat server **141** inherently implies memory

In referring to claim 29, Okada in view of Bunney shows,

- Said memory is provided in each of said terminal devices:

Okada, Figure 2 shows the chat clients **110a**, **120b**, and **130c** run on computers **110**, **120**, and **130**, which inherently imply memory

In referring to claim 30, Okada in view of Bunney shows,

- Said converting means is provided in each of said terminal devices:

Okada, Figure 7 shows the character-train information is displayed on the terminal devices which inherently implies that the user identifier information is converted on the terminal device

In referring to claim 3, although Okada in view of Bunney shows substantial features of the claimed invention, including the system of claim 1, Okada in view of Bunney does not explicitly show said table means contains different character-train information for the identifier of a same person for use in communications with different persons. Nonetheless this is well known in the art and would have been an obvious use of the system of Okada in view of Bunney.

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The chat system of Okada in view of Bunney does not prevent users from creating different usernames for use in different virtual spaces thereby causing the table to contain different character-train information for the identifier of a same one person for use in communications with different persons, in order to allow the user to remain anonymous to a first person in a first chat channel while simultaneously using character-train information that identifies the user to a second person in a second chat channel.

Conclusion


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Scott M. Klinger whose telephone number is (571) 272-3955. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9:00am - 5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glenn Burgess can be reached on (571) 272-3949. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Scott M. Klinger
Examiner
Art Unit 2153

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